

Attendees: Lauri Bridgeforth (Chair), Terry Bohan, Beau Correll, Scott Dawson, Marilyn Finnemore, Cory Garman, Mark Lore, Rick McClendon, Susan Touchette, and Andrea Smith. **Downtown Manager:** Jennifer Bell. **City Manager:** Eden Freeman. (Notes taken by Sarah Acuff Chapman)

- **Call to Order**
 - Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – approved unanimously.
 - Expenditures Report – no questions.
- **Chair Updates** – Lauri will rotate off the board after the October meeting and a new Chair is needed.
 - **Nominations. Board Chair.** Susan nominated Scott Dawson for Board Chair. Andrea seconded. Beau nominated Cory Garman for Board Chair. Rick seconded. Request that nominees provide information on why they would like to be chair. Request that votes be cast by secret ballot. No objections. **Board Vice Chair.** Scott nominated Rick McClendon. Cory seconded. **Motion to close the nominations. Seconded. Passed unanimously.** Nominees asked to provide Jennifer with their position papers in the next 2 weeks.
 - **Food Trucks.** Lauri emailed board members link to an article printed in the Winchester Star about food trucks in Winchester. Issue that the board will probably face at some point.
 - How did hot dog vendor get started?
 - Not a food truck. He's a vendor on the Loudoun Street mall.
 - Distinguish between vendors with stands and people with trucks?
 - Yes. Policy in place on vendors.
 - How different?
 - Because of the vehicle on the mall prohibition. Issue is not the business, but the vehicle.
 - Ultimately, the city restricts vehicles on the mall. Issue was looked at when the mall reopened and council decided on the 7:30-10:30 a.m. time frame for when vehicles are allowed on the mall for very specific reasons. This is the distinction between and vendor and a food truck. Rick requests a copy of this policy.
 - Subject to tax?
 - Yes, but not paying the special assessment tax.
 - City has issued permits for food trucks in the past. The standard way permits have been issued is a temporary permit (14 days) or seasonal permit (90 days) from zoning and permitting. Get Winchester business license from the Commissioner of the Revenue as a vendor and set-up on private property.
 - Eden shared that there was a policy discussion with City Council. Food trucks can't be on public property. Can get permission from a private property owner, for example, Braddock Street United Methodist in the downtown. Have to have permission. Not only does vehicle ordinance prohibit trucks on the mall after 10:30 am, the truck in question is 23 ft. long and exceeds the weight for what you can have on the mall. City staff is having a broader discussion about putting together a packet for anyone interested in having a food truck. Contain information on all ordinances that apply. Very interested in OTDB feedback as staff works to develop packet.
 - Food trucks common in DC, but so are trucks that sell t-shirts and hats. Is that what Winchester wants? Predictable that this issue will present itself and needs to be addressed.
 - Cannot meter feed. Cannot take up more than one parking space. The way the city ordinance is currently written, a truck cannot park at a meter and feed the meter. Private property will require permission of the property owner.

- If on private property, owner can charge them rent, require to pay insurance, etc. In that case, playing fair with other businesses.
 - But not paying special assessment tax.
 - But whoever owns the lot, is paying that tax.
- Lauri's original question. Does the OTDB want to do the research and will the city eventually need a policy on food trucks and does the OTDB want to take that up?
 - Based on Eden's comments, seems that the city is already addressing the issue. Eden does welcome feedback from the OTDB. Give to Jennifer and she will pass it on to staff.
- Can food trucks get a vehicle permit for the mall?
 - No. Permits are for maintenance, etc.
- As part of a Special Event, trucks could be on the mall?
 - Previously, there have been smaller trucks on the mall as part of an event.
- Technically, they could set up on any given weekend?
 - Only if under a Special Event permit and small enough.
- Is there any reason to believe that the Health Codes that apply to restaurants are more lax for this type of business?
 - No. Subject to same inspections and required to provide proof to get a business license. Also have to collect meals tax.
- City-wide issue, not just Old Town?
 - Yes, but generally trucks want to be downtown
- Question of aesthetics and vendors. Permits issued for vendors and a tent that is a certain size. Then there is "creep" boxes, coolers, chairs, etc. that go beyond the original permit space. Not aesthetically pleasing for the walking mall. Issue needs to be addressed by OTDB. Issue during special events as well.
 - Does Special Events Policy address aesthetics and vendors? Can it be amended to add something about this?
 - Does the vendor policy address this? No, not aesthetics. Just technical requirements like business license and insurance, etc. The city does not decide what type of vendor is allowed.
- What if require BAR approval for vendors operating more than twice a month? Or some other kind of board approval because they are essentially becoming a fixture downtown and the aesthetic concern comes in.
 - Thinking about criteria and threshold numbers could be something for a few people to flesh out, perhaps design committee.
- Lauri – what kind of direction should this board take in regards to food trucks?
 - Sounds like city council already has a plan. Can make vendors the topic for the next design committee meeting.
- People get permits and do people go back and check compliance? Creeping, volume. Is it worth telling people when they apply for permits that someone from the city will be checking the aesthetics of the event and if you violate any of the things in your permit, you have a fine?
 - Can discuss.
 - Police chief can withhold a permit if someone violates the terms. Police are scheduled to patrol. With vendors on the mall, no, they are not checked every day. May be checked on initial set-up or periodically.
 - Aesthetics are personal taste. Do we want to spend our time addressing something like that? How measure? Be clear on what we mean by aesthetics.
 - Police patrol events for illegal or non-permitted activity.
 - Noise level needs to be addressed. Several complaints. Noise threshold is high and measurement has to be taken from inside a building in order for police to enforce. Police will come out and measure if complaint is received. May become more of an issue as more residential space downtown.

- No issue right now for the OTDB to address regarding food trucks. Would like to get educated on current ordinances so informed if issue comes up in the future.
- **City Council Updates – Eden**
 - Next meeting is next Tuesday night, regular council meeting. There is no work session the following Tuesday. The next work session will be the last Tuesday.
 - Reviewing the Special Events Policy internally. Hope to have it on the work session agenda for the last week of the month.
- **Committee/ Work Plan Updates**
 - Design – Cory
 - Did not meet this month.
 - Promotions – Mark
 - \$1500 Winchester Education Foundation Sports Booster at Handley High School. Begin with football season, which starts this Saturday. Will be announcements at the game encouraging people to come down to the renovated walking mall in Winchester. Will be setting up an information table at the first game. Mark will be there 1-2 hours before the game. Others invited to join him. Sponsorship continues at home games now through the basketball season.
 - Still working on Piccadilly Street Block Party, scheduled for Oct. 11, 2-8 p.m. Challenge in getting the word out to businesses and getting people to commit. Goal of several bands toward the latter part of the event, afternoon scavenger hunt and raffle. OTWBA has offered to assist. Hope to have event set later this month so posters can be printed. Have a number of restaurants, bars and stores that are taking part. Plenty of verbal interest. Difficulty in pinning people down saying what they are going to do and going to offer. Also looking for some sponsorship.
 - Student Discount decals for downtown businesses participating. Give discounts to SU and LFCC students. Most downtown businesses participate already. Those that don't have been solicited by the Promotions Committee to see if they would like to give a discount of their choosing to students. More decals available to distribute. Let Jennifer or Mark know if a new business would like to participate. List is posted on the SU website and LFCC website for student to see.
 - Economic Restructuring – Scott
 - Did not meet this month.
 - Organization – Rick
 - Encourage people to participate at the VA Main Street Conference next Tuesday.
- **VA Main Street Conference**
 - Reception Monday night to welcome everyone. Meeting is all day Tuesday. Lauri giving opening remarks. Meeting goes into Wednesday. OTDB members invited to stop in anytime, particularly Monday night, to welcome attendees. Distributed agenda and volunteer sign-up sheet. Expecting about 50 people at the welcoming reception. Conference topics geared toward organization and promotions.
- **Parking Validation Coupons**
 - Beau and Jennifer met with members of the Parking Authority to learn more about the program and what they expected of the OTDB. Survey asking if people knew about the program and if they participate. A lot of people know about it, but a sizeable portion did not, but of those that did know, most of them do not participate. Talked about possibility of a discount offer in part to encourage participation by downtown businesses. Suggested that people buying prepaid tickets in bulk would receive a discount. Reception by the WPA was lukewarm. They have budgetary issues, and we do as well, but they do want us to market this for them. This is something they talked extensively about that they want from us. Suggested idea of getting a sponsor to purchase the prepaid tickets and perhaps have the logo of the sponsor on the ticket. Concern of OTDB budget constraints and whether or not we can

market this program for them. Beau's thoughts are that we don't make any money from this directly, however we are expected to kind of raise their money for them. There is a benefit to merchants, but essentially just a prepaid ticket. Applies to the parking garages, not the meters. Jennifer said that information booklets available for board members to pass around downtown. Something we could do that would just take volunteer time. Creating posters and establishing a list of businesses participating and signing people up takes more time and resources. WPA was receptive if we formally want to make a proposal to them. Currently have to purchase 100 tickets at time. Jennifer followed-up with Samantha at parking who said she penciled OTDB in on their next month's agenda. Hoping that if indeed the OTDB wanted a discount, we might make that case. Jennifer would like support from the OTDB in changing the budget to pay for the coupons that the Parking Authority needed to order to continue the program. They did that based on the agreement that we had previously assuming that was going to continue, which was \$744.00 that wasn't previously budgeted for but is an expense that we have agreed to cover as they agreed to purchase the validating machine in the past. Could consider continuing or not after this purchase.

- OTDB asked for this program to be created to benefit merchants. 2 issues currently.
 - It was previously agreed upon to pay for this year's program. Need a recommendation from the board to change the budget.
 - Do we want to continue/change the program in the future?
- WPA paid for the \$20,000 machine with the agreement that OTDB would pay for the coupons. Indefinite time frame. Started prior to Lauri's term (~6 years).
- Request to see the payment agreement. Does a previous board's decision bind a current board?
- **Motion to table this item and an agreement be produced in the coming weeks. Seconded. Motion approved unanimously.**
- **Request to address issue of new board member to fill vacancy.**
 - City Council regularly does interviews. Lauri made several councilors aware that there are vacancies on the OTDB, as Jennifer has as well. After October when Lauri ages off, there will be 2 vacancies. Don't know if applications have been received as they don't go to Jennifer directly. Applications aren't stored on file. If someone is interested, they have to reapply. Council interviews candidates as applications are received. Has taken a long time to fill positions in the past. Rolling application process. How do vacancies affect the quorum? Total number of members decreased so number needed for quorum decreased as well.
- **Downtown Manager's Updates – Jennifer**
 - Old Town Winchester App. There was an issue with the iPad download so the Apple version was pulled until fixed. Now available again. Mark will promote it at the Handley game. Now we need to reach out to businesses on how to use the app.
 - Events
 - Downtown Tailgate. Rain or Shine this coming weekend. Could use volunteers for evaluations. Also help pouring beverages and taking tickets.
 - FNL in August was successful.
 - Sunday Jazz Series –September 14, 28, and October 12. 1-3:30 p.m. at the Taylor Pavilion. In response to request by restaurants to have Sunday events and other requests for more cultural programming. Free. Will be the first public event at the Pavilion. Need to get the word out that it is a public space.
 - OTWBA – Plaid Friday. Encourage plaid use. Asking for ideas.
 - Welcome Center. Getting A-frame OPEN sign. Over 1600 people in the last year. About half were tourists. 2:1 parking at meters. Average numbers by day about the same.
 - Domain names. IT dept. notified Jennifer that we have numerous. Perhaps original intent was to keep others from using them. \$15-20/year each to keep. Still a good idea? Believe they all redirect to current page. Consensus was to keep them.

- Sarah's 1 year anniversary.
- PHW 50th anniversary celebration to be held at the Taylor Pavilion. Invitation extended to OTDB members.
- Over 8000 likes on Facebook.
- Happy Birthday, Lauri!
- **OTWBA – Christine Germeyer**
 - Nothing to report other than discussion about food truck. Owners were looking for assistance from OTWBA but unless they went through the proper channels to obtain what they needed to put themselves on the mall or at either end, nothing the OTWBA could do. Brainstormed places the truck could go on private property. Lauri is member at Braddock Street UMC. Could be point of contact if interested in the parking lot.
- **Public Comments – Susan Touchette**
 - Downtown signage at Splash Pad to report suspicious activity, call non-emergency number. Could we get behind this and have one put up? Concern over adults without children watching children playing. Susan happy to look for sponsorship to pay for it. Important to address when marketing a family friendly thing.
 - Bring up topic from last meeting about police downtown, in uniform or plain clothes.
 - Cory not sure putting up signage is the right message for Old Town. Possible to have conversation with a rep. from the police department at the next meeting? Can request downtown officer to come.
 - Some discussion at OTWBA meeting. Officer attended meeting. Said if suspect suspicious activity, call the non-emergency number. Police have to be there to see what's going on and question the individual. Don't wait and post concerns later or a day later. Do it when you see it.
- **Public Comments – Beau**
 - Crosswalk Update? Safety issue at SVDM. Staff met internally and developed 3 proposals. Public Works agreed to speak with the resident and business owners in the alleyway to discuss the proposals with them to see if it would be an inconvenience for them to change the way the alley is currently structured. Expect a report fairly soon.
 - Change route of exiting, change alley to 2-way so not an exit point on Piccadilly, change to 1-way the other directions, but concern about people pulling in and not noticing people walking behind cars and signs. Not as favorable.
 - Beau commends staff for taking the time to address the issue. It's a huge safety issue.
 - Eden – surveys went out last week and should have answers/responses back by the end of the week or early next week.

Motion to adjourn. Seconded. Approved.

Adjournment at 6:51 p.m. Next meeting –**Thursday, October 2** at 5:30 p.m., Rouss City Hall, 4th Floor Exhibit Hall